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KINSHASA FOR BRAZZAVILLE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/13/2016

TAGS: IV PGOV

SUBJECT: MEDIATION TEAM TO BRIEF ECOWAS AND AU LEADERS ON  
POLITICAL IMPASSE IN COTE D'IVOIRE

Classified By: AMBASSADOR AUBREY HOOKS FOR REASONS 1.4 B/D.

¶1. (C) General Jean Marie Michel Mokoko, the Special Representative for the Presidency of the African Union, informed the Ambassador on December 11 that the Mediation Group, composed of himself, D/SRSG Abou Moussa, HRE Gerard Stoudmann and ECOWAS Chairman Chambas will be meeting this week with the Presidents of Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso and Congo (Brazzaville) to brief them on the current political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. Mokoko said that the Gbagbo/Banny Tandem was clearly not working and the political process was now in an impasse. The four presidents the Mediation Group will visit need to consider how ECOWAS and the AU can become more engaged in Cote d'Ivoire. Mokoko expressed concern that no progress has been made in November and December, which will make it difficult to meet the deadline of October 2007 set in UN Resolution 1721 for holding elections. The Presidents of ECOWAS and the AU should consider whether Resolution 1721 is the right vehicle for moving Cote d'Ivoire out of crisis or whether additional measures are needed.

¶2. (C) In an aside, General Mokoko said that AU President Sassou did not appreciate the unhelpful role that South African President Mbeki has played in Cote d'Ivoire at times. When President Sassou came to Abidjan in September, he obtained the approval of President Gbagbo and the opposition leaders to a draft communique. However, President Gbagbo called President Mbeki, who advised him not to sign it, thus torpedoing President Sassou's efforts to mediate a solution to the crisis. When President Sassou gave a copy of the draft communique to President Mbeki in Cuba during the Non-Aligned Summit, Sassou was surprised by President Mbeki's cavalier attitude. Moreover, President Sassou did not appreciate the fact that President Mbeki sabotaged the September meeting on Cote d'Ivoire which SG Annan called in New York.  
Hooks